

GIPSA Names New Compliance Division Director

WASHINGTON, July 15, 2004 - The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) named John Sharpe as the new director of the agency's compliance division.

"John's leadership and technical capabilities are valuable assets to the agency," said GIPSA Administrator Donna Reifschneider. "We are delighted with the experience, technical and managerial skills and integrity he brings to this critically important position."

The compliance division protects the integrity of the national grain inspection and weighing system. The division ensures industry and official inspection system adherence to the U.S. Grain Standards Act and Agricultural Marketing Act and their respective regulations. It also administers a preventive compliance program to identify and correct any problems that might adversely affect the operation, accuracy or integrity of the official system.

Sharpe brings to the position a lifetime of agricultural experience, valuable skills and expertise gained during his diverse and highly accomplished professional career. A Florida native, he attended the University of Florida where he earned a degree in Food and Resource Economics and Animal Science. Before joining USDA in 1982, Sharpe managed a corporate sugar cane farm and worked with the Georgia Department of Agriculture. While with USDA, he worked for the Agricultural Marketing Service, the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (now the Farm Service Agency) and GIPSA's Federal Grain Inspection Service. Most recently, Sharpe was chief of GIPSA's data and information analysis branch, where he re-engineered the agency's national quality control program and developed a new process verification program designed to meet the evolving needs of agriculture.

Sharpe replaces Neil Porter, who was director from 1993 until his retirement on July 3, 2004.

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